



## DESIGN GUIDANCE STREAMLINED DESIGN REVIEW

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Project Number: 3020783

Address: 3136 Wetmore Avenue South

Applicant: Mark Haizlip for Alloy Design Group LLC

Date of Report: Wednesday, September 23, 2015

DPD Staff: Holly J. Godard

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### SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Lowrise 2 (LR2)

Nearby Zones: (North) Lowrise 2 (LR2)  
(South) Lowrise 2 (LR2)  
(East) Single Family 5000 (SF 5000)  
(West) Lowrise 2 (LR2)

Lot Area: 8,122 square feet



**Current Development:**

Currently there are three single family homes on the two parcels making up the development site. (3136 and 3138 Wetmore Avenue South)

**Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:**

The surrounding development is a mix of townhouses and single family homes.

**Access:**

Access is via Wetmore Avenue South. The platted alley is unopened.

**Environmentally Critical Areas:**

Liquefaction soils and steep slope Environmentally Critical Areas (ECA) are located on site.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The applicants are proposing a development with eight (8) three-story townhouses. No parking is required or proposed.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Public comment letters were received which pointed out the lack of on street parking in the area and which asked for onsite parking for this development.

<b>PRIORITIES &amp; BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS</b>
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After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Planner provided the following siting and design guidance. The Planner identified the Citywide Design Guidelines & Neighborhood specific guidelines (as applicable) of highest priority for this project.

**DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES**

The priority Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines are summarized below. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

## CONTEXT & SITE

**CS1 Natural Systems and Site Features: Use natural systems/features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for project design.**

**CS1-B Sunlight and Natural Ventilation**

**CS1-B-1. Sun and Wind:** Take advantage of solar exposure and natural ventilation. Use local wind patterns and solar gain to reduce the need for mechanical ventilation and heating where possible.

**CS1-C Topography**

**CS1-C-1. Land Form:** Use natural topography and desirable landforms to inform project design.

**CS1-C-2. Elevation Changes:** Use the existing site topography when locating structures and open spaces on the site.

**CS1-D Plants and Habitat**

**CS1-D-1. On-Site Features:** Incorporate on-site natural habitats and landscape elements into project design and connect those features to existing networks of open spaces and natural habitats wherever possible. Consider relocating significant trees and vegetation if retention is not feasible.

**CS2 Urban Pattern and Form: Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.**

**CS2-B Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces**

**CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street:** Identify opportunities for the project to make a strong connection to the street and public realm.

**CS2-B-3. Character of Open Space:** Contribute to the character and proportion of surrounding open spaces.

**CS2-C Relationship to the Block**

**CS2-C-2. Mid-Block Sites:** Look to the uses and scales of adjacent buildings for clues about how to design a mid-block building. Continue a strong street-edge and respond to datum lines of adjacent buildings at the first three floors.

**CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale**

**CS2-D-2. Existing Site Features:** Use changes in topography, site shape, and vegetation or structures to help make a successful fit with adjacent properties.

**CS2-D-5. Respect for Adjacent Sites:** Respect adjacent properties with design and site planning to minimize disrupting the privacy of residents in adjacent buildings.

**CS3 Architectural Context and Character: Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.**

**CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes**

**CS3-A-2. Contemporary Design:** Explore how contemporary designs can contribute to the development of attractive new forms and architectural styles; as expressed through use of new materials or other means.

The proposal should fit well within the LR2 zone and along Wetmore Avenue South by establishing a pattern of good site planning. Use the topography of the site to step units and avoid basement and dark units. Where possible, ensure that there are operable windows to encourage light and air for individual units. Retain trees where possible and if they can be fully protected during construction. Provide a sense of privacy by locating windows and doors away from neighboring windows and doors as shown in your diagrams. Use architectural methods to reduce the sense of height, bulk and scale. Use railings instead of solid forms, provide useable balconies, vary the building forms, use nuances in changes of colors and materials, etc. Connect the development to the street by providing a common and sympathetic entry as shown. Further refine the two unit entries on the street to reinforce the interaction and sequence of public to private space.

## PUBLIC LIFE

**PL2 Walkability: Create a safe and comfortable walking environment that is easy to navigate and well-connected to existing pedestrian walkways and features.**

### **PL2-B Safety and Security**

**PL2-B-1. Eyes on the Street:** Create a safe environment by providing lines of sight and encouraging natural surveillance.

**PL2-B-2. Lighting for Safety:** Provide lighting at sufficient lumen intensities and scales, including pathway illumination, pedestrian and entry lighting, and/or security lights.

**PL2-B-3. Street-Level Transparency:** Ensure transparency of street-level uses (for uses such as nonresidential uses or residential lobbies), where appropriate, by keeping views open into spaces behind walls or plantings, at corners, or along narrow passageways.

### **PL2-C Weather Protection**

**PL2-C-1. Locations and Coverage:** Overhead weather protection is encouraged and should be located at or near uses that generate pedestrian activity such as entries, retail uses, and transit stops.

**PL2-C-2. Design Integration:** Integrate weather protection, gutters and downspouts into the design of the structure as a whole, and ensure that it also relates well to neighboring buildings in design, coverage, or other features.

**PL2-C-3. People-Friendly Spaces:** Create an artful and people-friendly space beneath building.

### **PL2-D Wayfinding**

**PL2-D-1. Design as Wayfinding:** Use design features as a means of wayfinding wherever possible.

**PL3 Street-Level Interaction: Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.**

### **PL3-A Entries**

**PL3-A-1. Design Objectives:** Design primary entries to be obvious, identifiable, and distinctive with clear lines of sight and lobbies visually connected to the street.

**PL3-A-2. Common Entries:** Multi-story residential buildings need to provide privacy and security for residents but also be welcoming and identifiable to visitors.

**PL3-A-3. Individual Entries:** Ground-related housing should be scaled and detailed appropriately to provide for a more intimate type of entry.

**PL3-A-4. Ensemble of Elements:** Design the entry as a collection of coordinated elements including the door(s), overhead features, ground surface, landscaping, lighting, and other features.

#### **PL3-B Residential Edges**

**PL3-B-4. Interaction:** Provide opportunities for interaction among residents and neighbors.

The site entry is good for the project presence on the street. The lighting plan enforces the entry and courtyard experience. Provide weather protection where possible. Provide a drain and hose bib near the trash for cleaning.

### **DESIGN CONCEPT**

**DC2 Architectural Concept:** Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.

#### **DC2-A Massing**

**DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass:** Use secondary architectural elements to reduce the perceived mass of larger projects.

#### **DC2-B Architectural and Facade Composition**

**DC2-B-1. Façade Composition:** Design all building facades—including alleys and visible roofs— considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that all facades are attractive and well-proportioned.

**DC2-B-2. Blank Walls:** Avoid large blank walls along visible façades wherever possible. Where expanses of blank walls, retaining walls, or garage facades are unavoidable, include uses or design treatments at the street level that have human scale and are designed for pedestrians.

#### **DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features**

**DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest:** Add depth to facades where appropriate by incorporating balconies, canopies, awnings, decks, or other secondary elements into the façade design. Add detailing at the street level in order to create interest for the pedestrian and encourage active street life and window shopping (in retail areas).

**DC2-C-2. Dual Purpose Elements:** Consider architectural features that can be dual purpose— adding depth, texture, and scale as well as serving other project functions.

**DC2-C-3. Fit With Neighboring Buildings:** Use design elements to achieve a successful fit between a building and its neighbors.

#### **DC2-D Scale and Texture**

**DC2-D-1. Human Scale:** Incorporate architectural features, elements, and details that are of human scale into the building facades, entries, retaining walls, courtyards, and exterior spaces in a manner that is consistent with the overall architectural concept

**DC2-D-2. Texture:** Design the character of the building, as expressed in the form, scale, and materials, to strive for a fine-grained scale, or “texture,” particularly at the street level and other areas where pedestrians predominate.

**DC2-E Form and Function**

**DC2-E-1. Legibility and Flexibility:** Strive for a balance between building use legibility and flexibility. Design buildings such that their primary functions and uses can be readily determined from the exterior, making the building easy to access and understand. At the same time, design flexibility into the building so that it may remain useful over time even as specific programmatic needs evolve.

**DC4 Exterior Elements and Finishes: Use appropriate and high quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.**

**DC4-D Trees, Landscape, and Hardscape Materials**

**DC4-D-1. Choice of Plant Materials:** Reinforce the overall architectural and open space design concepts through the selection of landscape materials.

**DC4-D-2. Hardscape Materials:** Use exterior courtyards, plazas, and other hard surfaced areas as an opportunity to add color, texture, and/or pattern and enliven public areas through the use of distinctive and durable paving materials. Use permeable materials wherever possible.

Thank you for the changes you have made after our conversation. The buildings seem to sit better on the site. For the front units reconsider the sloping roof forms at the street units; they appear to be somewhat heavy. A flat roof might work better with the modern idiom with a smaller slope or architectural nod to a residential roof form. The roof and the front door weather protection should have a good “conversation” with one another. Add a railing or other handrail at the individual entry steps. Consider a different type of window on the front that allows light into the entry, but not views into the interior of the unit. The individual front entries on the sidewalk are a good site design response. Further explore how they will function for the unit. Consider a small porch and then entry into the unit. Consider a semi-public area and a semi-private area for the entry sequence, even if each sequence element is short. Porches, a trellis, or paving could help define the sequence. The development main entry and mail area is good.

Choose hardy and interesting plants for the planting plan that provide screening and luxurious shapes where possible. Consider controlling planting edges with curbs or short walls so plants do not get trampled and corners do not turn to mud.

Lower the front fencing one or two feet and add a vine maple type multi-trunk tree to provide screening for a sense of privacy and seasonal color above the fence. Provide vines to grow on the fence.

Lower the stair penthouses to the minimum building code will allow. Provide a sketch that omits the penthouse roofs to determine if there is a better solution to the roof forms or omit them all together.

## **DEVELOPMENT STANDARD ADJUSTMENTS**

Design Review Staff's recommendation on the requested adjustment(s) will be based upon the adjustment's potential to help the project better meet these design guideline priorities and achieve a better overall design than could be achieved without the adjustment(s).

At the time of Design Guidance, no adjustments were requested:

## **STAFF DIRECTION**

**At the conclusion of the Design Guidance, the DPD Staff recommended the project should move forward to building permit application in response to the Design Guidance provided.**

1. Please be aware that this report is an assessment on how the project is meeting the intent of the Design Guidelines. This review does not include a full zoning review. Zoning review will occur when the MUP plans and/or building permit is submitted. If needed and where applicable, SDR adjustments may be requested in response to zoning corrections.
2. If applicable, please prepare your Master Use Permit for SEPA review with a thorough zoning analysis listing the 23.45 and SMC 23.54 code section criteria, showing both required and proposed information (include page number where you graphically show compliance). You may want to review Tip 201 (<http://web1.seattle.gov/dpd/cams/CamList.aspx>) and may also want to review the MUP information here: <http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/permits/permittypes/mupoverview/default.htm>
3. Along with your building permit application, please include a narrative response to the guidance provided in this report.
4. Include colored building elevations and colored landscape plans in the MUP ( if applicable) and the building permit. Call out materials and colors.
5. All requested adjustments must be clearly documented in the building permit plans.